

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The main objective of this study was to analyse the language of hip hop song lyrics and music videos of hip hop music genre in terms of the use of taboo language and the portrayal of genders. It hopes to also investigate the perception of local listeners towards these songs and music videos with the aim to compare their perceptions with those from the local media industry.

In this chapter, the results of the data analysis conducted for this study on the data that comprise of hip hop song lyrics and music videos, survey and interview conducted will be discussed in detail. The results from the content analysis will be tabulated to present taboo words and phrases as well as gender stereotyping themes.

4.1 Taboo Words and Phrases in Hip Hop Song Lyrics

This section presents the findings from the content analysis conducted on the corpus comprising of 139 hip hop song lyrics. Findings of taboo words and phrases in hip hop lyrics, gender stereotyping themes in hip hop song lyrics and gender stereotyping themes in hip hop music videos.

4.1.1 Categories of Taboo Words in Hip Hop Song Lyrics

This section presents the types of taboo words found in the corpus of 139 hip hop song lyrics from an album each of ten hip hop artists. Words presented will be arranged based on the highest frequency and percentage.

Table 4.1 presents three main categories based on Jay (1992:4) in terms of frequencies found for taboo words.

Table 4.1
Categories of Taboo Words in Song Lyrics

Category		Male Gender	Female Gender	Neutral Gender
1.	Obscenity	1	1	3
2.	Vulgarity	1	3	11
3.	Slang	10	1	3
4.	Slurs	3	2	1
5.	Epithets	1	0	3
6.	Scatology	0	0	3
7.	Profanity	0	0	1
8.	Miscellaneous	1	3	24
Total		16	10	49

Table 4.1 shows that there are eight (8) categories of taboo language found in the selected hip hop song lyrics. The data reveals that there are more types of male gender specified taboo words compared to taboo words specified for the female gender. Of these categories, except for Miscellaneous, slang was found to be the most number of terms (10) referring to the male gender. As for the female gender, vulgarity was the most for the female gender with three (3) terms. Vulgarity also seems to be the category that are neutral to either gender. Miscellaneous category has the highest number of terms and will be dealt with in the latter part of the section.

The subsequent parts of this section will present the wordlist in each category and the frequency of each word found in the song lyrics. The first wordlist belong to the category of Obscenity as presented in Table 4.2 below.

Table 4.2
Wordlist and Frequency for Obscenity Category

<i>Category: Obscenity</i>								
Male Gender			Female Gender			Neutral Gender		
Word	f	%	Word	f	%	Word	f	%
motherfuck (er)/(ing)	33	3.36	titties	1	0.1	fuck (ing)	67	6.82
-	-	-	-	-	-	sex(ing)	10	1.01
-	-	-	-	-	-	sexually	1	0.1

f=frequency %=percentage

In the category of obscenity, as seen in Table 4.2, the male gender specified word *motherfuck (er)/(ing)* has a higher frequency of 3.36% (n=33) compared to the female gender specified word *titties* with a frequency of 0.10% (n=1).

Table 4.3
Wordlist and Frequency for Vulgarly Category

<i>Category: Vulgarly</i>								
Male Gender Specified			Female Gender Specified			Neutral Gender Specified		
Word	f	%	Word	f	%	Word	f	%
dick	5	0.5	hoe(s)	15	1.52	freak(ing)	32	3.25
			booty	8	0.81	hell	17	1.73
-			vagina	1	0.1	one night stand	16	1.62
-			-			sucker	12	1.22
-			-			high	8	0.81
-			-			freak(s)	8	0.81
-			-			grind	6	0.61
-			-			screw(ing)	2	0.2
-			-			horny	1	0.1
-			-			suicide	1	0.1

f=frequency %=percentage

In the category of Vulgarly, only one (1) word for males was found as opposed to three (3) terms for females in the data. The female gender specified words *hoe(s)* has a count of 15 (1.52%) frequencies, the word *booty* has a count of 8 (0.81%) frequencies, and *vagina* has a count of 1 (0.1%) frequencies.

Table 4.4 presents the words that fall in the category of slang. In this category, there are ten (10) words for males as opposed to only one (1) term for females. The data reveals that male gender specified word *homies (homeboys)* has a higher count of 49 (4.98%) frequencies compared to the female gender specified word *shawty (shorty)* with a frequency count of 69 (7.02%).

Table 4.4
Wordlist and Frequency for Slang Category

<i>Category: Slang</i>								
Male Gender Specified			Female Gender Specified			Neutral Gender Specified		
Word	f	%	Word	f	%	Word	f	%
homies (homeboys)	49	4.98	shawty (shorty)	69	7.026	porn star	5	0.509
hustler(s)	34	3.46	-			make out	1	0.1
gangsta (gangster)	19	1.93	-			nerd(s)	1	0.1
pimp(ing)	11	1.12	-			-		
dude	9	0.91	-			-		
thug (ing)	6	0.61	-			-		
gold dig(er) / (ing)	3	0.3	-			-		
punk	2	0.2	-			-		
playa	1	0.1	-			-		
sugar daddies	1	0.1	-			-		

f=frequency %=percentage

Next, Table 4.5 presents the terms that belong to the category of slurs.

Table 4.5
Wordlist and Frequency for Slurs Category

<i>Category: Slurs</i>								
Male Gender Specified			Female Gender Specified			Neutral Gender Specified		
<i>Word</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Word</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Word</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>%</i>
nigga	181	18.43	Bitch	49	4.98	swine	1	0.1
dawg	12	1.221	chick(s)	13	1.32	-		
homo	1	0.1	-			-		

f=frequency %=percentage

In the category of slurs, the male gender specified word *nigga* has a higher count of 49 (4.98%) frequencies compared the female gender specified word *bitch* with a frequency count of 49 (4.989%). In total, there are three (3) terms for males as opposed to two (2) terms for females.

Table 4.6 below presents the terms that belong to the epithets category.

Table 4.6
Wordlist and Frequency for Epithets Category

<i>Category: Epithets</i>								
Male Gender Specified			Female Gender Specified			Neutral Gender Specified		
Word	f	%	Word	f	%	Word	f	%
bastard	1	0.101	-	-	-	shit	122	12.42
-	-	-	-	-	-	damn	19	1.93
-	-	-	-	-	-	bullshit	6	0.61

f=frequency %=percentage

In the category of epithets, only 1 term “*bastard*” was found for the male gender specified word. Although no terms were not found for female gender specified taboo words, three terms were considered to be neutral by respondents with *shit* being the highest frequency.

Table 4.7
Wordlist and Frequency for Scatology and Profanity Categories

<i>Category: Scatology</i>								
Male Gender Specified			Female Gender Specified			Neutral Gender Specified		
Word	f	%	Word	f	%	Word	f	%
-	-	-	-	-	-	fart(s)	1	0.1
-	-	-	-	-	-	Snot	1	0.1
-	-	-	-	-	-	urine	1	0.1
<i>Category: Profanity</i>								
Male Gender Specified			Female Gender Specified			Neutral Gender Specified		
Word	f	%	Word	f	%	Word	f	%
						god damn	1	0.101

f=frequency %=percentage

No words for these two categories were found for male and female specified words in the present study. All three terms were considered to be neutral by respondents. Interestingly, only one phrase *god damn* was found in the category of profanity in the corpus.

Table 4.8 presents the wordlist that fall in the miscellaneous category and these words are not gender specific words as they represent words relating to sex, liquor and drugs. These words were taken out of the data to represent the sensitivities of the local culture.

Table 4.8
Wordlist and Frequency for Miscellaneous Category

<i>Category: Miscellaneous</i>								
Male Gender Specified			Female Gender Specified			Neutral Gender Specified		
Word	f	%	Word	f	%	Word	f	%
-			virgin	3	0.3	kiss(ing)	13	1.3
-			g-string	1	0.1	alcohol	10	1.01
-			panties	1	0.1	make love	6	0.61
-						champagne	5	0.5
-			-			henny (Hennessey)	5	0.5
-			-			sexy	4	0.4
-			-			cocaine	4	0.4
-			-			beer	2	0.2
-			-			drugs	2	0.2
-			-			drunk	2	0.2
-			-			hug	2	0.2
-			-			liquor	2	0.2
-			-			reefer	2	0.2
-			-			vodka	2	0.2
-			-			wine	2	0.2
-			-			coke (cocaine)	1	0.1
-			-			condom	1	0.1
-			-			Corona	1	0.1
-			-			crazy	1	0.1
-			-			crack (cocaine)	1	0.1
-			-			Kristal	1	0.1
-			-			strip club	1	0.1
-			-			tipsy	1	0.1
-			-			weed	1	0.1

f=frequency %=percentage

In total, there are three (3) words for females as opposed to nil (0) terms for males. The female gender specified words in this category include *virgin* with a count

of 3 (0.3%) frequencies, *g-string* with a count of 1 (0.1%) frequencies and *panties* with a count of 1 (0.1%) frequencies.

The following table is a summary of the frequency of words found in the song lyrics pertaining to specific words referring to male, female and neutral genders.

Table 4.9
Total Frequencies for Male, Female and Neutral Gender Specific Words

Male Gender Specified		Female Gender Specified		Neutral Gender Specified	
Frequency	368	Frequency	161	Frequency	415
Percentage	38.98%	Percentage	17.05%	Percentage	43.96%

It can be seen in Table 4.9 that there is a total of 368 frequencies of male gender specified taboo words compared to 161 frequencies of female gender specified taboo words in the corpus of song lyrics. The figure below summarizes the total frequencies in percentage form for male, female and neutral specific taboo words.

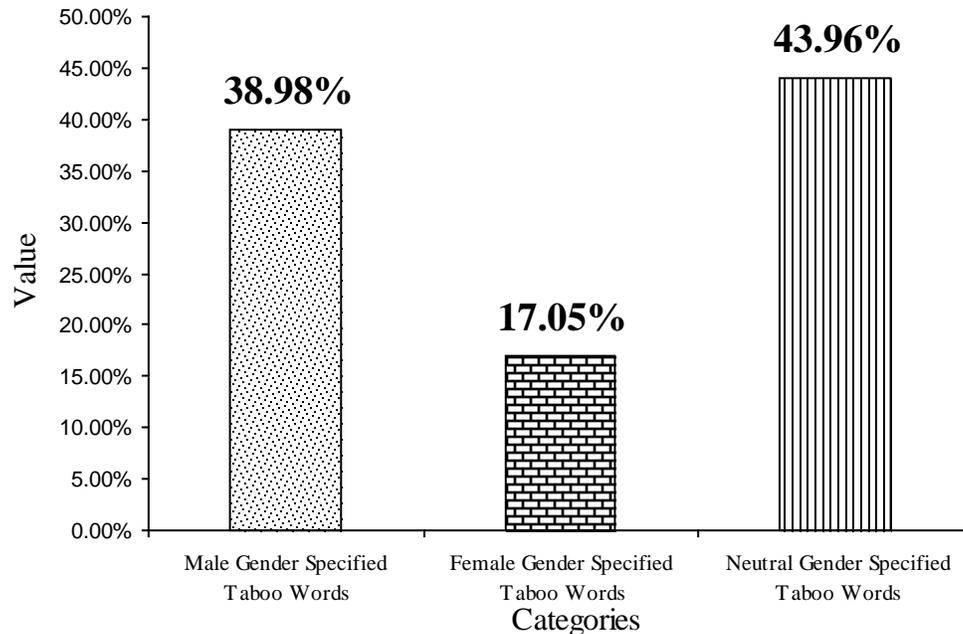


Figure 4.1
Male, Female and Neutral Gender Specified Taboo Words in Hip Hop Lyrics

In summary, the data reveals that the male gender specified taboo words have higher frequencies compared to the female gender specified taboo words in four of the categories listed, namely, obscenity, slang, slur and epithets.

4.2 Taboo Phrases in Hip Hop Song Lyrics

This section presents the findings on taboo phrases in the corpus. The phrases are categorized into sexual connotations, epithets and vulgarity.

Table 4.10
Categories of Taboo Phrases in Song Lyrics

Subcategories	Number of Phrases According to Gender of Artistes		Frequency in Corpus	Percentage in Corpus
	Males	Females		
a) Sexual Connotations	Frequency	Frequency	126	27.4%
	87	39		
	Percentage	Percentage		
	69.047%	30.952%		
b) Epithets and Vulgarity	Frequency	Frequency	333	72.6%
	307	26		
	Percentage	Percentage		
	92.192%	7.807%		
TOTAL			459	100%

Table 4.10 is a comparison analysis of the total of taboo phrases that have been identified in the song lyrics of the male and female artistes as used in the corpus of this study. The data reveals that in both categories for taboo phrases, song lyrics in the male artistes' albums have a higher count of frequencies of taboo phrases compared to the song lyrics in the albums of the female artistes.

In the category of sexual connotations, a total of 87 (69.047%) taboo phrases have been identified in the song lyrics of the male artistes compared to 39 (30.953%)

taboo phrases in the female artistes' song lyrics. Examples of sexual connotations as found in the sample are:

- *"Say you heard I was screwing her, just like I hear he doing you",*
- *"I know why he pursuing you, that booty do be moving boo",*
- *"Late night, straight pipe, that ain't nothing new to you",*
- *"Scoping out the room and what do I SEE? A nice round butt, an a pair of double D's",*
- *"Gotta keep it fresh even when we sexing but don't be mad at him when he's on the next one,"*
- *"Let the MC search till I reach third base, and when I get home imam hit home plate"*
- *"And I got da women screamin', and they could catch my balls on any given Sunday"*
- *"Before I make you too wet, girl you know you want it, your body's nice, but eh, you need some Luda on it".*

This is followed by the category of epithets and vulgarity, whereby the male artistes' song lyrics contain the higher frequency count of 307 (92.19%) taboo phrases compared to the female artistes' frequency count of 26 (7.8%) taboo phrases. Examples of epithets and vulgarity in the sample are:

- *"Got me twisted yo ass goodbye I've kissed it, now you all on his ass, shawty look at his ass",*
- *"I don't need it Bitch",*
- *"And I gotta take my time with you, cause your shit is the shit",*
- *"Especially when the only thing I did was speak in class",*
- *"Your mother fuckers stay right there 'cause we too high up in the air",*
- *"And my hoe so sick, your new chick can't fuck with my old bitch, and you know this shit, I teach his ass".*

4.2.1 Gender Stereotyping Themes in Hip Hop Song Lyrics

Table 4.11 presents the different gender stereotyping themes identified in the song lyrics of the male and female artistes as used in the corpus of this study.

Table 4.11
Gender Stereotyping Themes in Song Lyrics

Subcategories	Number of Themes According to Gender of Artistes	
	Males	Females
a) Description of Lifestyle of Alcohol and Drugs by Artiste	Frequency	Frequency
	17	8
	Percentage	Percentage
	6.34%	3%
b) Description of Lifestyle of Fame and Wealth Material by Artiste	Frequency	Frequency
	111	11
	Percentage	Percentage
	41.41%	4.1%
c) Description of Mannerisms of Males by Artiste	Frequency	Frequency
	4	7
	Percentage	Percentage
	1.5%	2.61%
d) Description of Attractive Physical Appearance of Males by Artiste	Frequency	Frequency
	7	5
	Percentage	Percentage
	2.61%	1.86%
e) Description of Mannerisms of Females by Artiste	Frequency	Frequency
	22	7
	Percentage	Percentage
	8.2%	2.61%
f) Description of Attractive Physical Appearance of Females by Artiste	Frequency	Frequency
	22	5
	Percentage	Percentage
	8.2%	1.86%
TOTAL	Frequency	Frequency
	183	85
	Percentage	Percentage
	68.28%	31.71%
	268	
	100%	

According to the findings as shown in Table 4.11, the top three gender stereotyping themes in hip hop music videos can be found in the male artistes' music videos. The themes are Description of Lifestyle of Fame and Wealth Material by Artiste (41.41%), Description of Mannerisms of Female by Artiste (8.2%), and Description of Attractive Physical Appearance of Females by Artiste (8.2%).

4.2.2 Gender Stereotyping Themes in Hip Hop Music Videos

The present study includes hip hop music videos as part of its investigation. A total of 20 music videos were analysed and the findings are presented in Table 4.12.

Table 4.12
Categories of Gender Stereotyping Themes

No.	Theme
1	Display of Lifestyle by Artiste as the Main Character
2	Physical Appearance of the Artiste as Main Character and their Supporting Characters
3	Male and female Sexuality Displayed by Artiste as Main Character and their Supporting Characters
4	Display of Sexual Acts by Artiste as Main Character and their Supporting Characters

Findings in Table 4.12 show that there are four main themes in the 20 music videos analysed in the study. These are further analysed according to their sub-categories and are presented in the following section in Tables 4.13 to Table 4.16.

In Table 4.13, the highest frequency for this category on lifestyle are two themes, namely, alcohol consumption and display of fame and wealth which tie at 27.2% each (n=7). It should be noted here that both sub themes are also the highest frequency for the male artists. None were found to be significant for the female artists.

Table 4.13
Subcategories of Display of Lifestyle by Artiste as the Main Character

Subcategories	Themes According to Gender of Artistes		F	%
	Male Artiste	Female Artiste		
a) Alcohol consumption	Frequency	Frequency	6	27.2
	5	1		
	Percentage	Percentage		
	83.33%	16.66%		
b) Smoking of cigar or cigarette	Frequency	Frequency	3	13.7
	3	0		
	Percentage	Percentage		
	100%	0%		
c) Main character surrounded by sexy characters from the opposite sex	Frequency	Frequency	3	13.7
	2	1		
	Percentage	Percentage		
	66.66%	33.33%		
d) Gambling activity	Frequency	Frequency	1	4.5
	1	0		
	Percentage	Percentage		
	100%	0%		
e) Nightclub activity	Frequency	Frequency	3	13.7
	2	1		
	Percentage	Percentage		
	66.66%	33.33%		
f) Display of fame and wealth material	Frequency	Frequency	6	27.2
	5	1		
	Percentage	Percentage		
	83.33%	16.66%		
TOTAL			22	100

F=frequency %=percentage

In Table 4.14, the highest frequency for this category on physical appearance is female characters are scantily clad at 48% each (n=12). The sub theme has the highest frequency for the male artistes. None were found to be significant for the female artistes.

Table 4.14
Subcategories of Physical Appearance of the Artiste as
Main Character and their Supporting Characters

Subcategories	Number of Themes According to Gender of Artistes		F	%
	<i>Male Artiste</i>	<i>Female Artiste</i>		
a) Male characters are dressed in sophisticated suits	Frequency	Frequency	6	24
	5	1		
	Percentage	Percentage		
	83.333%	16.666%		
b) Male characters are shirtless	Frequency	Frequency	3	12
	1	2		
	Percentage	Percentage		
	33.333%	66.666%		
c) Male characters display diamond accessories	Frequency	Frequency	3	12
	3	0		
	Percentage	Percentage		
	100%	0%		
d) Female characters display high end fashion accessories	Frequency	Frequency	1	4
	3	0		
	Percentage	Percentage		
	100%	0%		
e) Female characters are scantily clad	Frequency	Frequency	12	48
	7	5		
	Percentage	Percentage		
	58.333%	41.666%		
TOTAL			25	100

F=frequency %=percentage

In Table 4.15, the highest frequency for this category on male and female sexuality is female characters strike erotic poses at 52.9% each (n=9). The sub theme has the highest frequency for the female artistes. None are significant for the male artistes.

Table 4.15
Subcategories of Male and Female Sexuality Displayed by Artiste
as Main Character and Their Supporting Characters

Subcategories	Number of Themes According to Gender of Artistes		F	%
	<i>Male Artiste</i>	<i>Female Artiste</i>		
a) Male characters dance erotically	Frequency	Frequency	0	0
	0	0		
	Percentage	Percentage		
	0%	0%		
b) Male characters strike erotic poses	Frequency	Frequency	1	5.9
	0	1		
	Percentage	Percentage		
	0%	100%		
c) Female characters dance erotically	Frequency	Frequency	7	41.2
	3	4		
	Percentage	Percentage		
	42.857%	57.142%		
d) Female characters strike erotic poses	Frequency	Frequency	9	52.9
	4	5		
	Percentage	Percentage		
	44.444%	55.555%		
TOTAL			17	100

F=frequency %=percentage

In Table 4.16, the highest frequency for this category on sexual acts are two themes, namely, kissing and hugging of male and female characters, and display of fame and wealth which tie at 42.9% each (n=3). It should be noted here that in the theme of kissing and hugging of male and female characters, the female artistes have the highest frequency count, whilst in the erotic dancing between male and female characters, the male artistes have the highest frequency count. Both sub themes are also the highest frequency for the male artistes. None were found to be significant for the female artistes.

Table 4.16
Subcategories of Sexual Acts by Artiste as Main Character
and Their Supporting Characters

Subcategories	Number of Themes According to Gender of Artistes		F	%
	<i>Male Artiste</i>	<i>Female Artiste</i>		
a) Kissing and hugging of male and female characters	Frequency	Frequency	3	42.9
	1	2		
	Percentage	Percentage		
	33.33%	66.66%		
b) Female on female petting	Frequency	Frequency	0	0
	0	0		
	Percentage	Percentage		
	0%	0%		
c) Erotic dancing between male and female characters	Frequency	Frequency	3	42.9
	2	1		
	Percentage	Percentage		
	66.66%	33.33%		
d) Display of foreplay between male and female characters in bed	Frequency	Frequency	1	14.2
	1	0		
	Percentage	Percentage		
	100%	0%		
TOTAL			7	100

F = frequency, % = percentage

4.3 Perceptions of Taboo Words in Song Lyrics and Gender Portrayal in Music

Videos

This section will present the findings from the survey conducted among respondents Groups A and B. The analysis will be conducted based on findings from Part A - Word List, Part B - Song Lyrics and Music Videos.

4.3.1 Wordlist of Taboo Words

This section presents the word list of taboo words compiled from a survey conducted among respondents. Respondents were presented with a wordlist of words with negative connotation by the researcher compiled from song lyrics. Table 4.17 presents the words of which at least 50% of the respondents identified as having a

negative connotation. In this study the words identified as negative by respondents will be identified as taboo words for the purpose of the study. Interviews were also conducted with four media representatives (subjects) to compare the wordlist identified as negative by Groups A and B, which are the Malaysian audience and representatives from the local hip hop music scene.

Table 4.17
Taboo Words Identified by Respondents

No.	Negative Words as Rated by Group A	Frequency	Percentage	Negative Words as Rated by Group B	Frequency	Percentage
1	bastard	33	82.5%	hoe(s)	4	100%
				reefer	4	100%
				semen	4	100%
2	bitch	32	80%	dick	3	75%
				punk	3	75%
				weed	3	75%
3	dick	30	75%	bastard	2	50%
				bitch	2	50%
				drunk	2	50%
				grind	2	50%
				naked	2	50%
				nigga(s)	2	50%
				one night stand	2	50%
virgin	2	50%				
4	nigga(s)	27	67.5%			
5	weed	22	55%			
6	sucker	22	55%			
7	porn star	21	52.5%			
8	pimp/pimping	20	50%			
N=40				N=4		

Table 4.17 presents a list of perceived to be negative words by Group A and Group B respondents. The survey shows that *bastard* is rated number one as the most negative word by 33 (82.5%) respondents in Group A. However, among Group B respondents, who represent the local media, the number one position for the highest

rated negative words are *hoe(s)*, *reefer*, and *semen*, as rated by all 4 (100%) respondents.

This shows a difference in perceptions among the two groups. *Bastard*, which has the number one position for the highest rated negative words as perceived by respondents, Group A is only in the third position for Group B. *Bastard* is regarded as a taboo form of language in the society according to two of the subjects. It is categorised as an offensive word that is not used in normal conversation situations. The usage of *bastard* is not considered a norm in the society as by definition it refers to a child out of wedlock.

Subject 2 states:

<i>It's a harsh word. It's way too straight forward to call someone that. I do</i>	L16
<i>use it though, I'm sure we all do. But as for the society....it's still a taboo</i>	L17
<i>word. You can't go up to someone and say hey bastard. It's just down</i>	L18
<i>right rude.</i>	L19

S2/210710

Subject 3 comments:

<i>Bastard is a bad word. We don't use it on a daily basis. That's why when</i>	L7
<i>we're angry we use bad words. But when we're talking normal. When we</i>	L8
<i>talk normal we don't use it.</i>	L9

S3/310710

Bastard as used in hip hop songs is perceived to have the capability to influence the audience when using the word themselves, especially among the younger generation. According to The Cultivation Theory (Gebner and Gross, 1967), exposure to television, over time, subtly cultivates viewers' perceptions of reality and can have an impact on light viewers of television. Therefore, the audience is more likeable to imitate the words they hear, in particular taboo words, which are used repeatedly in hip hop songs.

Subject 2 states:

<i>Depends on who's listening. If adults...If small children...I tell you</i>	L23
<i>kids. Kids these days. I have this nephew of mine who hafal (memorise)</i>	L24
<i>talk normal we don't use it.</i>	L25
<i>all the songs he sees on his MTV. Like that Lady Gaga song, 'I wanna</i>	L26
<i>ride on your disco stick'. What the hell is thatlah wei! Disco stick. To</i>	L27
<i>you and me that sounds sexual. Stick is what else, right? They pick up</i>	L28
<i>anything they hear.</i>	

S2/160710

Subject 3 states:

<i>Yes. People sing along. And sometimes the story behind the lyrics. So</i>	L15
<i>they use the word they hear...</i>	L16
<i>...This could influence people to use it. And also a good song,</i>	L17
<i>you sing or dance to it.</i>	L18

S3/310710

Apart from that, *bastard* is used in hip hop songs, it does not hold any market appeal for the local audience. This is due to the reason that the quality of the music produced and the image of the artiste holds a bigger factor for audience acceptance. However, in certain circumstances the word is regarded as an artistic form of expression that the fans of hip hop music appreciate as part of the story telling by the artiste.

Subject 1 states:

<i>...anyway...not everyone pays attention to what the lyrics say</i>	L42
<i>mean. Some dolah. But usually it's about the catchy lyrics part.</i>	L43

S1/160710

Subject 2 states:

<i>...But for me, I feel that some things are best expressed</i>	L33
<i>in your own words. Music is an art. So if the rapper is angry</i>	L34
<i>the shit he goes through in life, then it's understandablelah.</i>	L35

S2/210710

Subject 3 states:

<i>Having the word bastard in a song...</i>	L22
<i>doesn't make it popular. The audience usually like songs for the</i>	L23
<i>singers</i>	

S3/310710

On the other hand, *hoe(s)*, *reefer*, and *semen* which were placed on the number one position for the highest rated negative words among Group B respondents, is positioned slightly lower in the position ratings among the Group A ratings. For instance, *hoe(s)* is positioned at number eight, as rated by 19 (47.5%) respondents. This is followed by *reefer* which is positioned at number seventeen, as rated by 10 (25%) respondents.

In general, subjects perceive *hoe(s)* as taboo language in the society because the nature of the word which means whores referring to women in particular. Even though *hoe(s)* is regularly used in hip hop out of emotional expressions, it is still considered a taboo for the local culture.

Subject 1 comments:

<i>So I would say hoe's is bad.</i>	L48
<i>Compared to bitch, hoes is always referring to women</i>	L50
<i>Not just mad, just women in general.</i>	L52
S1/160710	

Subject 2 comments:

<i>Hoes, personally I think is a personal attack on women in general. You don't wanna call every chick a hoe, that will get a big slap out of her. It's disrespectful.</i>	L40
	L41
	L42
S2/210710	

Subject 3 states:

<i>Rappers like to call women hoes. That's not good. It's not our culture.</i>	L33
	L33
S3/310710	

Subsequently, *semen* is perceived a taboo because it relates to a taboo topic in the society, which is sex.

Subject 1 states:

<i>Because it's too...too detailed...</i>	L55
<i>And also, I think directly when you hear it...it reminds you of</i>	L56

sex. So that 18SX already.	L57
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S1/160710

Subject 2 states:

<i>Semen not necessary to use in lyrics.</i>	L40
<i>Semen is a body fluid, you see.</i>	L44
<i>You use that word when you describe something related to sex.</i>	L45

S2/210710

Subject 3 states:

<i>That's like talking...talking about sex. It's just shouldn't be there.</i>	L37
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S3/310710

Subsequently, *hoe(s)* in hip hop songs has the capability to influence the society in using the word themselves, as well as to disrespect the female gender in general.

Subject 1 comments:

<i>Hoes. Some people who hear that word in songs may not respect women.</i>	L47
	L47

S1/160710

Subject 2 comments:

<i>Definitely. For hoes. It's like giving guys other choice words to</i>	L48
<i>Call women that jacked them. I don't mean for ordinary women.</i>	L49
<i>Like when a girl cheats on you, automatically you curse her.</i>	L50
<i>Bitch sometimes isn't strong enough.</i>	L51

S2/210710

Subject 3 comments:

<i>It influence them to talk that way. I think a lot of slang words</i>	L44
<i>or young people's sayings come from music and movies.</i>	L45
<i>Whatever they hear, they use it to talk with friends.</i>	L46

S3/310710

As a result, *hoes(s)* and *semen* in hip hop songs do not hold any market appeal for the local audience, even for the media representatives. The reason behind this is because Malaysia's market of music is described as mainstream and the audience in

majority favour music that is played on the local radio, where censorship in the language exists.

Subject 1 states:

<i>Urrrrm...to melah. I think not really. People like radio</i>	L60
<i>friendly songs. Malaysia likes Top 40.</i>	L61

S1/160710

Subject 2 comments:

<i>Our audience likes music for the music. Just because a...</i>	L58
<i>song uses the word hoes doesn't mean the song can't be</i>	L59
<i>likeable.</i>	L59

S2/210710

Subject 3 states:

<i>But it doesn't mean it will sell records.</i>	L42
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S3/310710

Table 4.18 presents words which are considered to be positive by all three groups of respondents. These words were extracted from Part A of the survey.

As shown on the next page, the table is a comparison analysis of the positive words as rated by Group A and Group B respondents. The results show that *hug* is the common word shared by both groups is in the number one position for the most frequently rated positive words in the wordlist. In Group A, *hug* is at number one position as rated by 30 (75%) respondents. In Group B, *hug* is also at the number one position along with *booty*, *chick*, *crazy*, *dude(s)*, *homies (homeboys)*, *hustler(s)* and *kiss(ing)*. Each of these words has been rated positive by all four (4) respondents in Group B. Note that surprisingly *hustler(s)*, *freak(s)*, *sucker* and *thug* are considered to be positive as perceived by the local hip hop representatives.

Table 4.18
Wordlist of Positive Words

No.	Positive Words as Rated by Respondents Group A	Frequency	Percentage	Positive Words as Rated by Respondents Group B	Frequency	Percentage
1	hug	30	75%	booty	4	100%
				chick	4	100%
				crazy	4	100%
				dude(s)	4	100%
				homies (homeboys)	4	100%
				hug	4	100%
				hustler(s)	4	100%
				kiss(ing)	4	100%
2	sex/sexing	25	62.5%	freak(s)	3	75%
				liquor	3	75%
				sexy	3	75%
3				dawg	2	50%
				Kristal	2	50%
				sex/sexing	2	50%
				shawty (shorty)	2	50%
				sucker	2	50%
				tipsy	2	50%
				thug	2	50%
				wine	2	50%
N=40				N=4		

The leveraging of taboo language in the media is perceived as both within and without control. In situations where taboo words are restricted in the media, it is due to censorship regulations. Therefore alternate censored versions are made available for the public which is a result of ethical practices of the content producer. In situations where it is without control, this is caused by the existence of the variety of uncensored versions are still accessible to the public.

Subject 1 comments:

<i>We have regulations and censorship bodies. Bad words, you just</i>	L81
<i>can't put them in there for people to read. It's not professional.</i>	L82
<i>For the entertainment or fashion side, usually using words like</i>	L83
<i>bitch or double meaning phrases is normal. It's like to cater for</i>	L84

<i>the fun and urban crowd. When it comes down to serious news or business, it's very inappropriate to use those words.</i>	L85
	L86

S1/160710

Subject 2 states:

<i>Even though when you download your own movies or songs, you can hear all the bad words. No censorship.</i>	L79
	L80
<i>Yeah, we have the radio friendly versions. That's something you control because we are very careful in songs selection. It's easy to make sure obvious taboo words are edited out. Like Akon. His original song is 'I wanna fuck you', but on the radio we have the 'I wanna love you' version.</i>	L90
	L91
	L92
	L93
	L94

S2/210710

Subject 3 states:

<i>You can hear a lot of bad words being used. Censorship is not as tight. The original DVDs can go through... censorship by our censorship body. But errr...when you buy the pirated cds nothing is cut. TV you can see in some channels it's very strict. Even words like damn is beeped. But I have to say some channels let words like sex,lesbian or any sexual words pass.</i>	L79
	L80
	L81
	L82
	L83
	L84

S3/310710

In summary, interviews reveal that media representatives acknowledge the presence of taboo words in hip hop songs. However, they are aware of the censorship board in Malaysia will not allow hip hop songs with words considered to be taboo by the local society to enter the market on public radio and television. What it implies is that the society, especially young listeners, have equal access to both censored and uncensored versions of hip hop songs.

4.3.2 Gender Portrayal in Song Lyrics and Music Videos

This section presents the findings of Part B of the survey on Song Lyrics and Music Videos. In this section, three (3) song lyrics of the same three (3) music videos were presented and respondents are required to identify representation of male and females in the song.

i) Song Lyrics

- *Sample 1 - Artiste D, Track 8*

Table 4.19 is a comparison analysis of the lines from song lyrics of Artiste D, Track 8 that has the highest rate of frequency among Group A and Group B respondents. In the representation of men, Group A's results indicate that line number 24 from the song lyrics of Track 8 of Artiste D, '*When you get off work, daddy gon' punish*' has the highest rate of frequency of 5 (12.5%) ratings. On other hand, Group B's results indicate that line number 22 from the song lyrics Track 8 of Artiste D, '*Favorite chore of mine, it's my lil' bunny*' has the highest rate of frequency of 3 (75%) ratings. Therefore, the comparison shows that a difference of perceptions exists between Group A and Group B.

In analysing the lines '*When you get off work, daddy gon' punish*', subjects in Group C perceive the lines as a form of sexual connotation that implies the male gender as being in control in the suggestion of sexual engagement. In addition, the portrayal of the male gender is regularly seen in this fashion in hip hop song lyrics, it also has the capability of generating market appeal for the audience due to the reason it is an attracting factor of subtle sexual appeal and sense of entertainment.

Subject 1 states:

<i>Like daddy, the guy is gonna do something naughty to the girl.</i>	L96
<i>You know, you need some sex appeal in a song sometimes.</i>	L106
<i>But doing it like this... creative.</i>	L107

S1/160710

Subject 2 states:

<i>....Saying daddy is not... father per se you know. It's referring</i>	L104
<i>to the sexual tension. Like owning someone and having the</i>	L105
<i>right to do anything sexual to them. So if a rapper says daddy</i>	L106
<i>gonna punish, it can appeal to the crowd. To make them feel</i>	L107
<i>flirty. Especially if it's music for the clubs. Not only music must</i>	L108
<i>be upbeat the catchy words make the crowds go.</i>	L109

S2/210710

Subject 3 comments:

<i>It shows that men are in control when it comes to sex.</i>	L83
<i>It has the sex appeal of men. For men.</i>	L84

S3/310710

On the other hand, 'Favorite chore of mine, it's my lil' bunny' is perceived by subjects as a favourable way for men to refer women. In addition, all of the subjects agree that the male gender is regularly portrayed in a more affectionate manner in hip hop songs than the female gender, which also represents a positive representation of the male gender. The phrase denotes a sense of affection and no sexual connotation is intended by the artist when it is used in the song. This is supported by statements of the subjects in the interviews:

Subject 1 states:

<i>Well looking at the lyrics it means the guy is basically being flirty.</i>	L113
<i>Men are men. They're flirty they like pretty girls.</i>	L123
<i>It makes the men use it as pick up lines for girls</i>	L126

S1/160710

Subject 2 states:

<i>...Bunny refers to a girl. Like cute cuddly thing. So they guy</i>	L122
<i>is just saying he likes being or doing whatever with his girl.</i>	L123
<i>It's not bad. It's cute. It's positive for the men showing affection.</i>	L130
<i>Instead of calling hoes or bitch, why not bunny you know</i>	L131
<i>It shows the softer side of the rapper. It's good. Like I said instead of</i>	L135
<i>saying hoes or bitch.</i>	L136

S2/210710

Subject 3 states:

<i>I think in a way the guy is being sweet and having pet names</i>	L96
<i>for the girl. So favourite chore of mine is like saying she's his number</i>	L97
<i>one person in mind.</i>	L98
<i>If the listeners like singing to something nice they hear it can.</i>	L108

S3/310710

As for the category of representation of women, both groups perceive line number 1 from the song lyrics, '*A lady in the street but a freak in the bed*' as a language symbolising representation of women with 24 (60%) ratings from Group A and 4 (100%) ratings from Group B.

In the category of negative language, a difference in perception exists between Group A and Group B in rating the most apparent form of negative language in the sample. Group A, with 16 (40%) ratings perceives the line '*A lady in the street but a freak in the bed*' as the most apparent form of negative language, in contrast to Group B subjects who rated the lines '*Clean in the workplace, dirty in the sheets*', '*When you get off work, daddy gon' punish' you my nasty girl forever I promise*' , and '*And nothin underneath so it's an all night deal*' as the more apparent form of negative language in the sample.

Subjects in Group C perceive the lines '*When you get off work, daddy gon' punish, You my nasty girl forever I promise*' as negative content for the media on the basis that the phrases denote sexual connotation, which is a taboo topic in the local culture.

Subject 1 states:

<i>Sexual. Too much. Just hearing the words daddy punish already</i>	L133
<i>inside your mind you're picturing a bedroom scene. Not romantic</i>	L134
<i>but dirty.</i>	L135

S1/160710

Subject 3 states:

<i>... because sounds like soft porn. But not everyone can figure out</i>	L150
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<i>what it refers to. But most would say hardcore sex the way he says</i>	L151
<i>punish and nasty together.</i>	L152

S3/310710

In addition to the above, the line '*And nothin underneath so it's an all night deal*' was seen as negative content for the media by one of the subjects because it also regarded as sexual connotation:

Subject 2 states:

<i>Okay, it refers to being naked. Nothing underneath. Although</i>	L150
<i>you won't really censor all of these words basically the meaning is</i>	L151
<i>sexual. Too sexual.</i>	L152

S2/210710

- **Sample 2 - Artiste E, Track 5**

Table 4.20 is a comparison analysis of the lines from song lyrics of Artiste E, Track 5, that has the highest rate of frequency among respondents Group A and Group B. In the category of representation of men, both groups share similar views, as 25 (62.5%) of Group A respondents and 4 (100%) respondents in Group B rated line number 1, '*You know them old sugar daddies*' as the most apparent form of the representation of men.

As for the representation of women, both groups agreed that line number 24 of the song lyrics, '*My chick can have what she want*' as the most apparent representation of women. The highest rate of frequency from Group A was 15 (12.5%) ratings, and 4 (100%) ratings from Group B.

In the category of negative language, Group A's results indicate that lines number 7 from the song lyrics has the highest rate of frequency of 22 (55%) ratings. Group B's results similarly indicate that line number 7, '*Late night sex, so wet and so tight*' has the highest rate of frequency of 4 (100%) ratings.

The comparison shows that there is a similarity of perceptions that exist between both groups in perceiving negative language in hip hop song lyrics.

- **Sample 3 - Artiste F, Track 11**

Table 4.21 is a comparison analysis of the lines from song lyrics of Artiste F, Track 11 that has the highest rate of frequency among respondents of Group A and Group B. In the Representation of Men category, both groups Group A with 5 (12.5%) ratings and B with 4 (100%) ratings perceive line number 2 - '*Them hustlas keep on talkin'*' - as the most apparent representation of men in the sample.

As for the Representation of Women category, Group A's results indicate that line number 1, '*Shawty, what yo name is?*' from the song lyrics has the highest rate of frequency of 15 (37.5%) ratings. In contrast, Group B's results show that line number 17 - '*You say you like my bag and the color of my nails*' - has the highest rate of frequency of 4 (100%) ratings by all subjects.

In reference to Group A's results, subjects in Group C perceive the phrase '*Shawty, what yo name is?*' as a phrase that is a neutral representation for women. Subsequently, the word '*shawty*' is described as a non offensive urban slang to refer to women and is regularly used in hip hop songs.

Subject 1 states:

.... <i>Yeah that is nickname for women.</i>	L139
<i>It's ok. Neutral.</i>	L144

S1/160710

Subject 2 states:

<i>Slang. A slang to ask shawty a chick her name.</i>	L160
<i>Maybe literally shawty mean short. But it can also mean something else.</i>	L165
<i>Just a cute way to call women like honey. Neutral lah.</i>	L166

S2/210710

Subject 3 comments:

<i>Calling the women shawty...biasa ah tu hip hop. (That's normal)</i>	L122
<i>Neutral. I don't think it does any harm having women called that. As long as not bitch.</i>	L127
	L128

S3/310710

Apart from that, according to two subjects, when the phrase '*Shawty, what yo name is?*' is used in a hip hop song, it has the capability of attracting the audience's appeal towards the song. This is because the word '*shawty*' is recognised as a slang in hip hop music that listeners are familiar with and is an affectionate way to refer to women.

Subject 2 comments:

<i>Yeah cause you can hear people singing the lines. Shawty is catchy.</i>	L169
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S2/210710

On the other hand, the phrase '*You say you like my bag and the color of my nails*' is described by two of the subjects as a positive representation of women. The phrase stimulates an attractive commercial image of women among the listeners.

Subject 1 comments:

<i>It's good. Hearing about how women like to be pretty in a song has it's commercial value. Gives good imagery to listeners.</i>	L160
	L161

S1/160710

Subject 3 comments:

<i>It sounds sexy. I don't mean in a sexual way but sexy like attracting</i>	L139
<i>Attention. It's good. Positive. Shows women are beautiful. Men should</i>	L140
<i>appreciate that... Talking about fashion and all that is the trend now.</i>	L141

S3/310710

In the category of negative language, Group A's results indicate that line number 1 from the song lyrics has the highest rate of frequency of 6 (15%) ratings. In contrast, Group B's results indicate that line number 45 of the song lyrics has the highest rate of frequency of 3 (75%) ratings.

In comparing the most negative form of language as rated between Group A and Group B, two of the subjects from Group C perceived the phrase '*You like it when I shake it?*' as negative content for the media due to the sexual connotation implied by the artiste in the song, and is deemed inappropriate for the younger audience.

Subject 1 states:

<i>Referring to sexy gestures. Like shaking the ass?</i>	L165
S1/160710	

Subject 2 states:

<i>It wouldn't be appropriate for underage people to listen to.</i>	L174
S2/210710	

It can be seen in the above that Groups C from the local music scene tend to have a different perception and this indicates that those from the media industry do not converge with the local society, even with those from the local media (Group B). Perhaps, this is due to their deeper understanding of hip hop culture and hence the words used in song lyrics.

ii) Music Videos

In Part B of the survey, Groups A and B were required to rate the gender representation of the male and female character in the music video according to a positive, neutral and negative rating. Figure 4.2 shows that the male character in Sample 1.

- ***Gender Representation of Male Character in Sample 1 - Artiste D, Track 8***

Figure 4.2 shows that the male character in Sample 1 was rated as negative by a majority of respondents in Group A (n=22, (55%). In contrast, a majority of 2 (50%) respondents in Group B had rated the male character as positive.

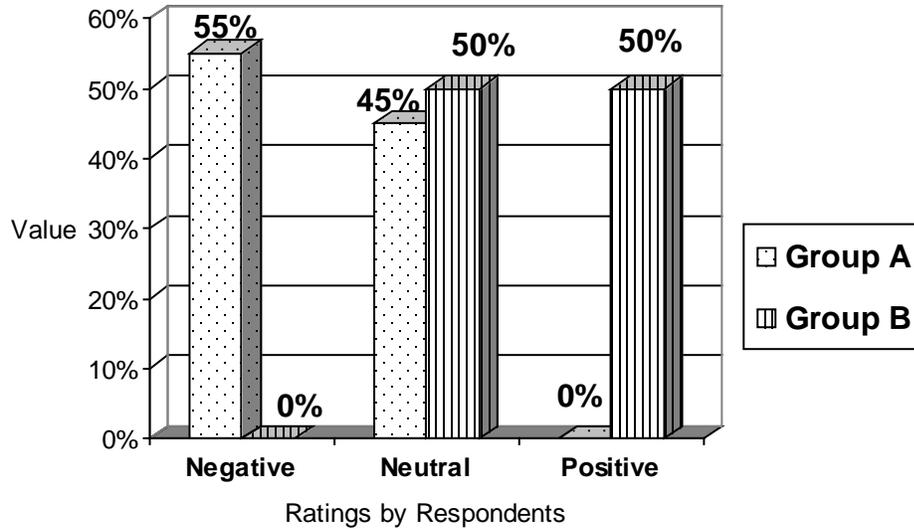


Figure 4.2
Comparison Analysis of Gender Representation of Male Character (Sample 1)

Figure 4.2 shows that the male character in Sample 1 was rated as negative by a majority of respondents in Group A (n=22, (55%). In contrast, a majority of 2 (50%) respondents in Group B rated the male character as positive. Group A respondents described the male character as a negative portrayal of men due to his sexual demeanor, whereby respondents termed the character as *thinks about sex*.

Subjects in Group C perceive a male character that *thinks about sex* as a commercial selling point for the music video. However, according to two of the subjects, the portrayal of a sexual male character has to be presented within appropriate cultural boundaries, which are through innuendoes. According to these subjects from the media industry, this is important so that the music video's entertaining message can be fully delivered without undergoing massive censorship processes.

Subject 1 states:

<i>...If it's subtle then or double meaning then it could be</i>	L187
<i>interesting you know. But if it's sex all the time it's tasteless. And that is</i>	L188
<i>not good for general viewing.</i>	L189

S1/160710

Subject 2 states:

<i>Sex sells. Everything you watch or hear has sex appeal.</i>	L201
<i>Yeah. It might be bring negative affects but it's entertainment.</i>	L203

S2/210710

Subject 3 states:

<i>But that's what sells. Sexy scenes. Hot</i>	L179
<i>scenes. Horny guy. It can be funny too. We have no control over this. It</i>	L180
<i>might not bring quality to the music video but if the lyrics are talking</i>	L181
<i>about it...sex...then the music video will have to show it the best</i>	L182
<i>possible way. That's not too dirtylah for our society.</i>	L183

S3/310710

On the other hand, Group B respondents perceive the male character as a positive portrayal of the male gender due to his *success* in attaining *fame and wealth*, and for *the gratitude he showed for the women in his life*.

Group C felt that *fame and wealth* portrayed by the male character as having the capability of generating market appeal of the music video among the audience. According to the subjects, they function as an entertaining fantasy and motivate the audience to succeed in their lives in order to gain material wealth as shown by the artistes in the music videos

Subject 1 states:

<i>It's what audience want to see. It's fantasy. Dreams can come true.</i>	L178
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S1/160710

Subject 2 comments:

<i>Hip hop music is entertainment. So when you see the rapper has a</i>	L189
<i>lavish lifestyle it's cool to seelah. All the cars big houses. It's motivating</i>	L190
<i>for the audience to see that anyone can have success and work harder</i>	L191
<i>in their lives.</i>	L192

S2/210710

Subject 3 comments:

<i>The hip hop stars show how very rich they are. It looks ridiculous for the</i>	L165
<i>average blue collar but it sends a message that if you make good music</i>	L166
<i>people like you then you can earn millions in no time. For entertainment</i>	L167
<i>industry it's easy to be rich as long as you have an x factor.</i>	L168

- **Gender Representation of Female Character in Sample 1 - Artiste D, Track 8**

Below is the graph representing the ratings by respondents on the female character in Sample 1.

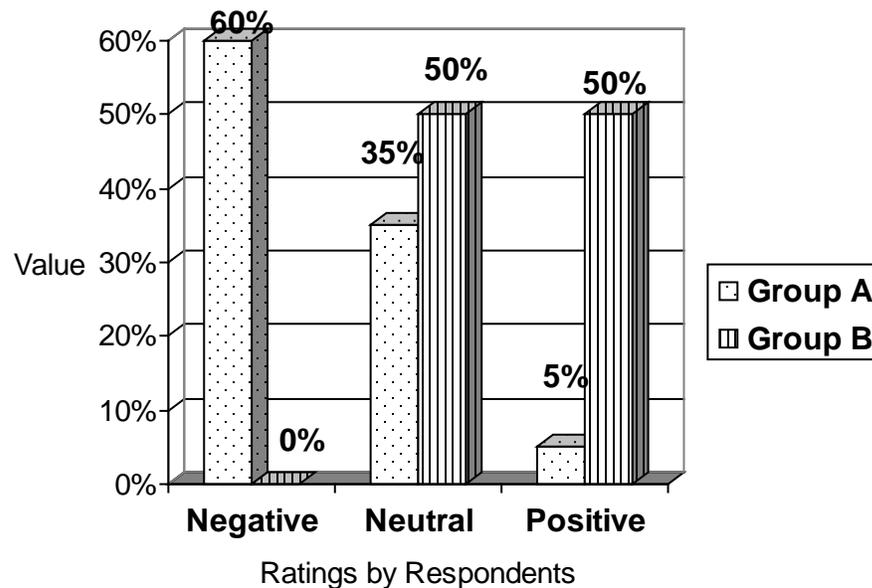


Figure 4.3

Comparison Analysis of Gender Representation of Female Character (Sample 1)

In rating the gender representation of the female character, as shown in Figure 4.3, Group A respondents also perceived the character as negative, with 24 (60%) ratings. 5 (12.5%) of the respondents had attributed her negative character as *too sexual*. Group B, however perceived the female character as both a neutral and positive gender representation. Two (50%) respondents described her positive traits as *independent, career women and eye candy*.

All three subjects in Group C perceived a female character that is *independent* as having the capability of generating market appeal for the music video. The subjects feel this way based on the reason that the particular element produces a positive image of women that possess self confidence and are individuals with talents in the music video.

Subject 1 comments:

<i>Independent is not just about having their careers or looking sophisticated.</i>	L219
<i>It can also show they're independent. Independent of self confidence.</i>	L220

S1/160710

Subject 2 comments:

<i>Shows women are strong and can be individuals. Usually in hip hop you</i>	L227
<i>see girls are just standing there looking hot and shaking their asses right?</i>	L228

S2/210710

Subject 3 comments:

<i>And that can come in any role if you ask me. Even if you have tigh choreography</i>	L213
<i>for the women, that is already independent...so cool. Being good at something...</i>	L214
<i>Having talent and not just posing.</i>	L215

S3/310710

A *career women* is perceived as having the capability of generating market appeal of the music video. According to the media representatives, this particular female role functions as positive female role models for the audience and at the same time can reach out to both professionals and non professionals' viewership.

Subject 1 comments:

<i>Shows that women can be sexy and have careers at the same time. Not</i>	L210
<i>just bimbos. And this can also produce something positive for women</i>	L211
<i>like...errr...having idol.</i>	L212

S1/160710

Subject 2 comments:

<i>It's positive to see women...being doctors lawyers and what not.</i>	L220
<i>So together they are the ultimate sex objects who have careers.</i>	L221
<i>That sets good examples.</i>	L222

S2/210710

Subject 3 states:

<i>Adults like it too you know. So having female characters</i>	L208
<i>like that....like professionals...hurmmm...it</i>	L209
<i>will reach out to a wider audience.</i>	L210

S3/310710

All three subjects perceived an *eye candy* role for a female character as having the capability of generating market appeal for the music video. This is due to the reason

that beauty is an essential element for female characters in the entertainment industry, and their physical attraction functions as fashion icons for viewers.

Subject 1 states:

<i>Beauty is everything in the media. If there's a new</i>	L250
<i>singer coming out I'm pretty sure they have a team of stylists to make</i>	L251
<i>sure they got the in look. People are sometimes obsessed about</i>	L252
<i>looking...look just like they're favourite stars. Style fashion that</i>	L253
<i>generates market appeal.</i>	L254

S1/160710

Subject 2 states:

<i>Hot girls is...attracting.</i>	L246
<i>Gorgeous models in your...</i>	L248
<i>music video. Up to date in the latest trends.</i>	L249

S2/210710

Subject 3 comments:

<i>Sexy hot girls makes the music video come alive in a way.</i>	L243
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S3/310710

- ***Gender Representation of Male Character in Sample 2 - Artiste E, Track 5***

Figure 4.4 is a comparison analysis of how Groups A and B perceived the gender representation of the male character in Music Video Sample 2.

Overall, 19 (48%) respondents in Group A had rated the male character as negative, while 3 (75%) of the respondents in Group B had rated the male character as positive.

Group A had described the male character as negative based on the perception that *his money can buy love*. Group B, on the other hand, felt that the male character was a positive portrayal of the male gender due to his material attainment of *having a jet*.

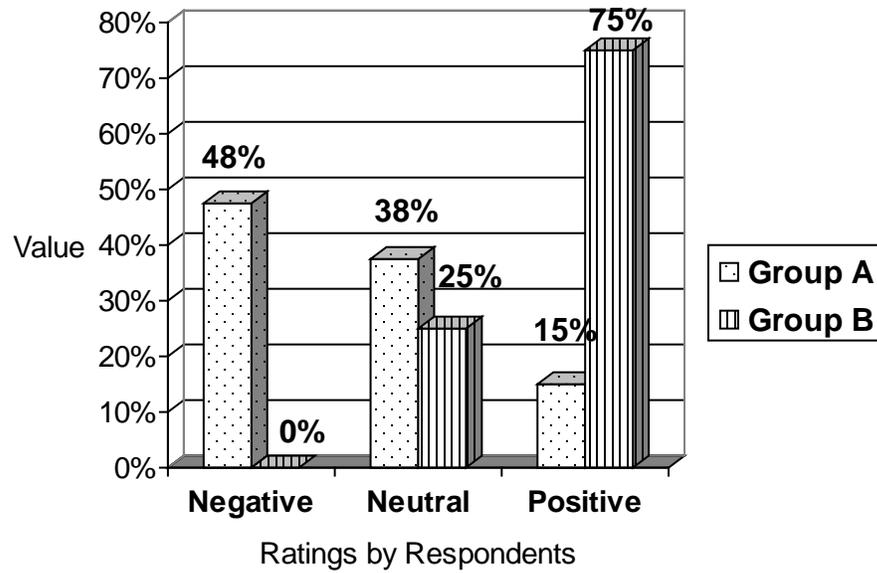


Figure 4.4
Comparison Analysis of Gender Representation of Male Character (Sample 2)

According to Group C, a male character that *has a jet* is perceived as having the capability of generating market appeal for the music video. It is through this portrayal of a male character that functions as a commercial selling point for the artiste's successful public image as well as a fantasy element approach in attracting the audience to view the music video.

Subject 1 comments:

<i>Yeah. Luxury, man. It's commercial. The rich and famous.</i>	L243
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S1/160710

Subject 3 comments:

<i>We can only see that in Hollywood. Haha. And I'm telling you to please</i>	L237
<i>the mainstream crowd you have to go all out. And it's also a way to</i>	L238
<i>promote the artiste himself. Like how successful he is just by making</i>	L239
<i>albums.</i>	L240

S3/310710

- ***Gender Representation of Female Character in Sample 2 - Artiste E, Track 5***

Figure 4.5 presents the perception towards the female character in Sample 2 Music Video.

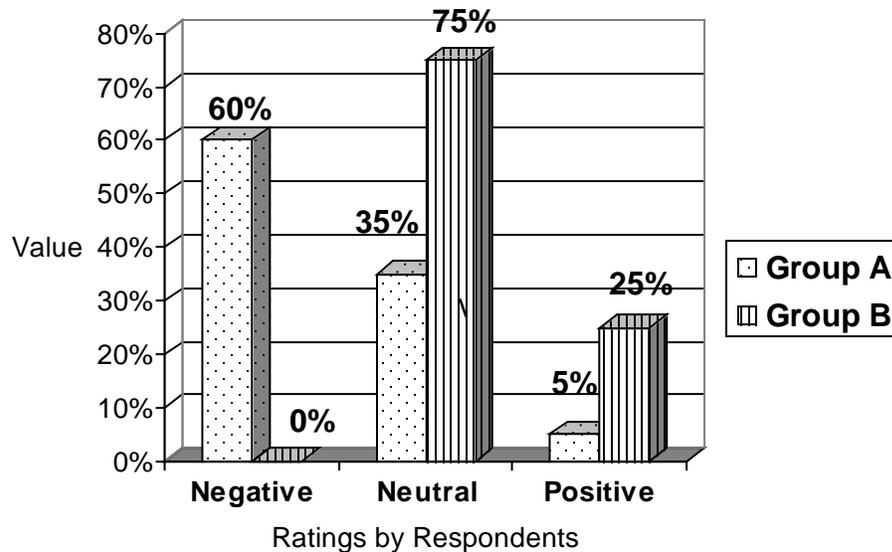


Figure 4.5
Comparison Analysis of Gender Representation of Female Character (Sample 2)

As presented in Figure 4.5, Group A perceived the female character in Sample 2 Music Video as a negative gender representation. In majority, 26 (65%) Group A respondents had rated the female character as negative due to her *materialistic/gold digger* demeanor.

Group C perceives a *materialistic* female character as a neutral element in the music video. One subject felt that the portrayal is appropriate in the story telling of the artiste in the music video and may serve as a moral message for the viewers.

Subject 1 states:

<i>But then again maybe the rapper is telling the story of how he hated</i>	L258
<i>materialistic girls. It's a story. A story about it could happen to you.</i>	L259

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Subsequently, 3 (75%) respondents in Group B rated the female character as a neutral gender representation.

- *Gender Representation of Male Character in Sample 3 - Artiste E, Track 5*

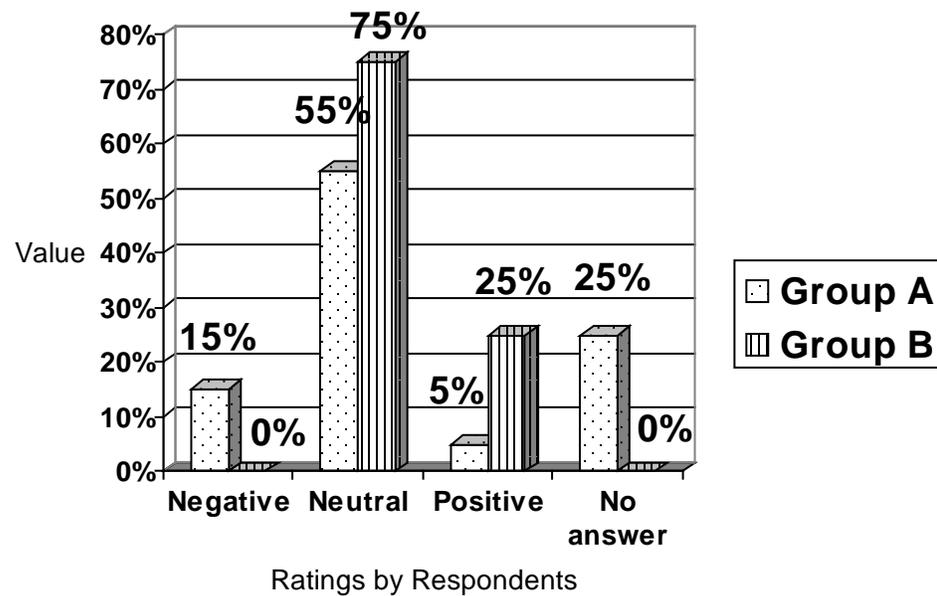


Figure 4.6
Comparison Analysis of Gender Representation of Male Character (Sample 3)

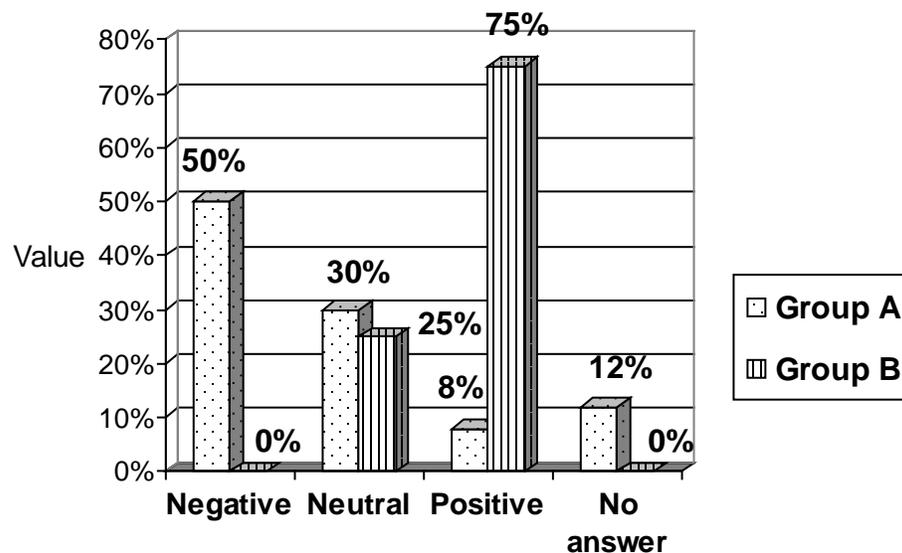
Figure 4.6, as seen above, presents ratings given by Groups A and B regarding gender representation of the male character in Sample 3 Music Video. In majority, 22 (55%) respondents in Group A, rated the character as neutral. Positive traits were listed as *allow/allowing women to take control, and submissive to women for a change*, whilst his negative trait was being a *slave*.

Similarly, Group C also perceived the female character as a neutral gender representation, with 3 (75%) ratings. The character was deemed positive as she was *cool, a good dancer, and something different*.

- *Gender Representation of Female Character in Sample 3 - Artiste E, Track 5*

According to Figure 4.7, the female character in Sample 3 Music Video was rated as a neutral gender representation. In Group A, 20 (50%) respondents had rated the female character as negative, followed by 12 (30%) ratings for neutral and the

remaining 3 (7.5%) ratings for positive. In this section, 5 (12.5%) of the respondents had not provided a rating for the male character.



Ratings by Respondents
Figure 4.7

Comparison Analysis of Gender Representation of Female Character (Sample 3)

The trait deemed positive by the respondents was her capability of being *able to take control of the situation*. As opposed to her negative trait, the character was deemed as *giving the perception that women have to wear skimpy clothes to be in charge*.

In majority, Group C had rated the female character as a positive gender representation, with 3 (75%) ratings. Being independent was listed as her positive character.

Figures 4.8 and 4.9 present the overall results of Groups A and B’s ratings on the gender presentation of male and female characters as displayed in all 3 samples of music videos in this study.

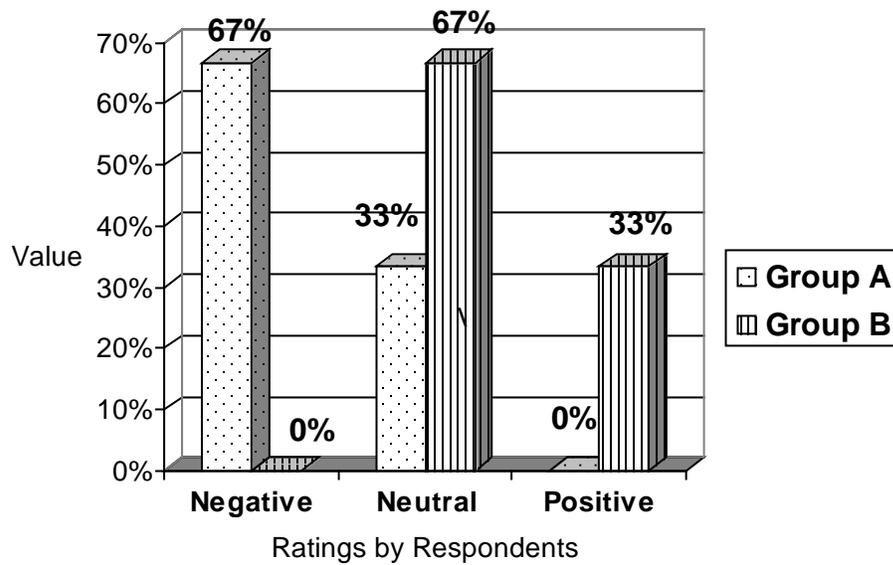


Figure 4.8
Overall Ratings of the Male Gender Presentation in Hip Hop Music Videos among Groups A and B

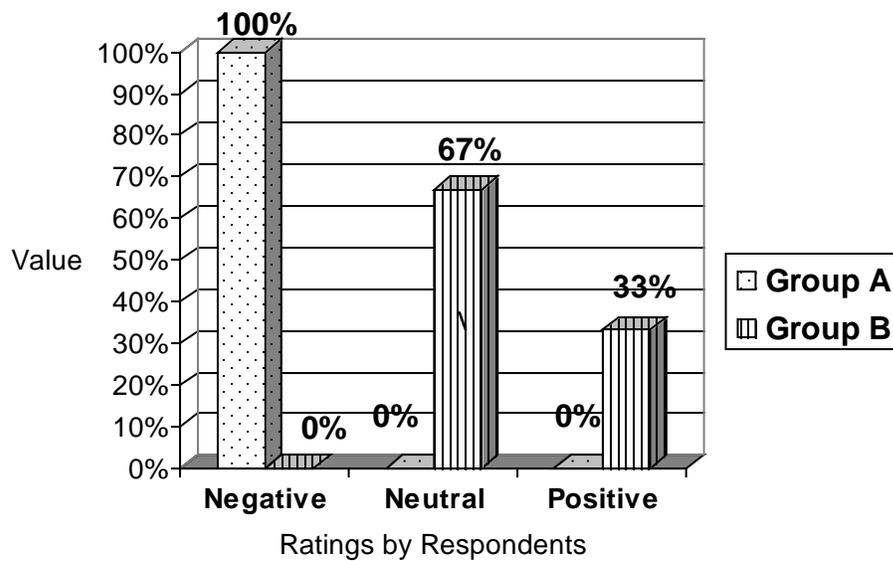


Figure 4.9
Overall Ratings of the Female Gender Presentation in Hip Hop Music Videos among Groups A and B

Figures 4.8 and 4.9 show that Group A respondents, the Malaysian audience, perceives that both male and female characters are negative representations of gender in hip hop music videos. In contrast, Group B, the local media representatives, respondents perceive that both male and female characters are neutral representations of gender in hip hop music videos.

The representation of gender in the print and visual media today generally emphasises on the physical attractiveness of the male and female characters as a factor to generate market appeal among the audience. According to Subject 3, physical attractiveness is a commercial image that both genders must possess and it functions as marketing strategy for a selling point towards current fashion trends.

Subject 3 comments:

<i>Looks is important. For both men and women</i>	L280
<i>It's just part of the package. It's....it's commercial. Also for</i>	L284
<i>product endorsement. When you're popular everything you use or wear is</i>	L285
<i>considered good quality. It's the image part that counts.</i>	L286

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On the other hand, Subject 1 perceives physical attractiveness as more apparent in the representation of the female characters compared to the male characters, whereby the male characters are recognized for their social status and talent qualities.

Subject 1 comments:

<i>Women for their looks. What they wore at the award show. It's all in the</i>	L284
<i>fashion column.</i>	L285
<i>If men it's about what champion they are who they're dating. Also how</i>	L287
<i>great their career is.</i>	L288

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On the other hand, the representation of gender in hip hop lyrics is perceived as a neutral scene for both the male and female characters. According to Subject 2, hip hop music is an artistic medium for artistes to express their thoughts on males and females. In addition, in scenarios where artistes use taboo language in referring to the opposite gender, the message intended is open for interpretation by the audience. On top of that, in the existence of male artistes that refer to women negatively in their song lyrics, there also song lyrics written and performed by female artistes that liberate the women gender from the oppression recited by the male artistes.

Subject 2 comments:

<i>If you're asking about hip hop I think it's a fifty fifty situation.</i>	L291
<i>Rappers might curse saying hoes bitch referring to women but that doesn't mean they totally disrespect...people can figure it out. Like Ludacris maybe it's his way of appreciating women's great personalities and bodies.</i>	L292
<i>...So it was an outlet to clarify things. And there are also brilliant female rappers like Eve and Missy Elliot they stand up for women.</i>	L294
	L295
	L300
	L301

S2/210710

4.4 Discussion

From the results, there are two observations that can be seen regarding the use of taboo words in hip hop song lyrics. The first observation is that, Group A and Group B have different perceptions on the highest rated taboo word as listed in the word list of the survey. Group A perceive *bastard* as the highest rated taboo word, which is only rated at 50% ratings or at a lower position among the ranking of taboo words as provided Group B. On the other hand, Group B perceive the words *hoe*, *reefer* and *semen* as the highest rated taboo words, which is only rated at below 50% ratings or at a lower position among the ranking of taboo words as provided by Group A. This conflicting data reveals that both groups have different culture familiarity levels in determining a specific word to be categorised as the most apparent form of taboo words. Group B respondents that consist of local hip hop representatives, have a tendency to be familiar with hip hop jargon and slang words compared to Group A respondents consisting of audiences of hip hop music. This also shows that certain taboo words in hip hop lyrics may not be clearly understood of the denotations by the audiences judging on the rarity of the certain taboo words being used in the hip hop song lyrics.

The second observation that can be seen is that male gender specified taboo words are used more in hip hop song lyrics compared to female gender specified taboo words. The female gender specified taboo words are *motherfuck (er)/(ing)*, *homies (homeboys)*, *nigga* and *bastard*. According to the subjects, there are several factors that

contribute to this finding. Certain taboo words are used based on the factor if the words are a norm in the society, it will contribute to the recurrent usage of the words in the media. This is regarded as a bridge between the society and the media on the sustainable existence of certain words as used in the music videos and song lyrics.

Another factor as perceived by the subjects is that certain words have market appeal in attracting the audience to listen to the songs. For instance, the word *shawty* has market appeal because it is considered an urban slang and is non offensive towards any gender. Although the word *shawty* literally means short as to refer to the female gender, it actually denotes an emotional attachment, or refers to a favourable nick name similar to words like honey, sweetheart and baby.

The factor that determines a certain word to be a taboo among the society is based on the factor whether the word is related to the topic of sex, which is a taboo topic in many cultures and societies in Asian countries, especially Malaysia. For instance, if the word *semen* is loosely used in hip hop songs, it would be considered a taboo word because the context relates directly to sex.

In taboo phrases, the results shows that in the corpus the male artistes use more taboo phrases compared to the female artistes. Compared to taboo words, subjects regard the usage of taboo phrases as having more negative impact among the audience. This is largely due to the content of sexual connotations that are deemed as verbal pornography and is not suitable for underage listeners.

The findings of this study confirms with the findings from Weiner's study (2008:8) that the negative messages found in hip hop music lyrics as viewed by the audience include sexism, violence, and glorification of money.

In this study, sexual connotation that are stereotypically associated relating to the female gender also confirms the findings from Lorde's study (1984:110) that male

rappers depict women as overly sexualized and Shelton's study (1997:116) that women are caricatures in the form of sexual objects.

In the result of gender stereotyping themes in hip hop lyrics, it can be seen that gender stereotyping themes occur more in male artistes' song lyrics compared to female artistes' song lyrics. The stereotyping themes that are related to males include the usage of alcohol and drugs, fame and wealth attributes and the nature of describing mannerisms of females. The stereotyping themes that are related to females include describing attractiveness in the physical appearance of males.

This clearly shows that in hip hop song lyrics, females tend to be associated with highlighting physical traits of gender. This is due to the factor that physical attractiveness generates commercial value and is deemed as an entertainment value among audiences. In addition, description of physical attributes or description of mannerisms of gender has the ability to project sex appeal that can be positive in terms of showing desire and affection.

From this study, it can be seen that there is more negative gender representations of females compared to the representations of males in hip hop music videos. The stereotypical elements of females that are deemed negative include excessive sex appeal, materialistic attitudes and giving the perception that women have to wear skimpy clothes to be in charge.

This finding shows that the product of sex has a favourable commercial value among audiences, despite the negative impacts it brings to the society. This confirms Gine's (2007:81) findings that sex is an image that sells and the projection of the sexually desirable bodies of females are sold in the entertainment industry for economic gain.

According to Crawford and Unger (2004:32), misconceptions about gender are largely due to information processing that is influenced by the social system that individual lives in. Therefore, it can be seen that the media plays a big role in shaping the views of gender among the society. In this case, the female gender is largely associated with negative traits which is literally being fed to the audience and has the capability of influencing females to act and look a certain way as prescribed by the media.

Furthermore, this study confirms the finding of Gow (1993:319) on how music videos are like commercial advertisements, selling the product of music and lifestyle. The lifestyle which is largely associated with females which are physical beauty and sexual appeal confirms the findings of past studies. Arnett (2002:256) states that women are that are typically portrayed in hip hop music videos project beauty, scantily clad costumes and are merely props.

In this study, the male characters that are typically associated with fame and wealth that confirm the findings of Arganbright and Lee (2007:20) that men are portrayed as powerful and have a certain degree of sexual prowess.

From this study it can be seen that the portrayal of gender in hip hop music videos is stereotypically associated with negative portrayals of the female gender. It has become a norm in the society and will continue to be portrayed in the media based on the conception that audiences favour the beauty and sexual appeal of females. In summary, hip hop music videos and its popular culture of prescribing gender stereotypes may remain to be prescribed in this particular way due to economical gains of the media.